

26 August 2008

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor

Excel 2007  
Microsoft

## [Prototype Kicks Excel 2007 Chart Capabilities to the Next Level](#) *Via Office Labs*

A new prototype offered by Office Labs is designed to kick the chart capabilities of Excel 2007 to the next level. According to the official description of Chart Advisor, the project is merely an add-in for Excel 2007 running on 32-bit Windows XP and Windows Vista. Set up to deliver an alternative to putting charts together, the prototype's functionality is limited to under 8,000 cells. Once the users have installed the add-in, they will be able to access Chart Advisor via an extra button featured on the Insert ribbon in Excel 2007, in close proximity to the default charting options. "Like any good business idea, it started as a dare: I bet you can't make an analysis engine to create the best chart for a set of data! You're on!! Aided with copious amounts of data from Microsoft Research, Office Labs formed a team around building the interface, the engine, and of course coming up with a clever name for the prototype. Hey, two of three isn't bad... Naming is really hard," revealed a member of Office Labs. However, Chart Advisor does not provide extra options on top of the standard charting tools and capabilities of Excel 2007, but it brings to the table what Microsoft referred to as an advanced rules engine. In this context, the add-in is capable of scanning the data made available via an Excel spreadsheet based on a predefined set of criteria and produce charts cataloged in accordance with their score. "We've looked at hundreds of spreadsheets, but given the vast capabilities of Excel, we've only scratched the surface of how people organize their data. Our rules are XML based to make them easier to update - so this project can evolve over time and get even better," the Office Labs representative added. Chart Advisor is available for download [here](#).